Chronic Disease Indicators: Indicator Definition

Recent mentally unhealthy days among adults aged >=18 years

Category:	Overarching Conditions
Demographic Group:	Resident persons aged >=18 years.
Numerator:	Sum of the number of days during the previous 30 days for which respondents aged >=18 years report that their mental health (including stress, depression, and problems with emotions) was not good.
Denominator:	Total number of respondents aged >=18 years who report >=0 days during the previous 30 days for which their mental health was not good (excluding unknowns and refusals) multiplied by 30 days.
Measures of Frequency:	Mean number of mentally unhealthy days during the previous 30 days — crude and age-adjusted (standardized by the direct method to the year 2000 standard U.S. population, distribution 9*) — with 95% confidence interval.
Time Period of Case Definition:	Previous 30 days.
Background:	During 1993–2000, the mean number of mentally unhealthy days (days when mental health was not good) during the previous 30 days was 3.0. During this period, 8.8% of adults reported "frequent mental distress" (i.e., >=14 mentally unhealthy days). This is the best available measure of population mental health.
Significance :	Poor mental health interferes with social functioning, is associated with health behavior, and should be monitored as an overall indicator of chronic disease burden. Recent mentally unhealthy days is used with recent physically unhealthy days to estimate the mean number of unhealthy days (days with impaired physical or mental health) during the previous 30 days — a summary measure of population health.
Limitations of Indicator:	Although this indicator is based on self-assessment, it has been demonstrated to have good reliability, validity, and responsiveness.
Data Resources:	Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS). http://apps.nccd.cdc.gov/HRQOL/
Limitations of Data Resources:	As with all self-reported sample surveys, BRFSS data might be subject to systematic error resulting from noncoverage (e.g., lower telephone coverage among populations of low socioeconomic status), nonresponse (e.g., refusal to participate in the survey or to answer specific questions), or measurement (e.g., social desirability or recall bias).
Healthy People 2010 Objectives:	HP2010 Overarching Goal 1: Increase quality and years of healthy life.

* See Klein RJ, Schoenborn CA. Age adjustment using the 2000 projected U.S. population. Hyattsville, MD: US Department of Health and Human Services, CDC, National Center for Health Statistics, 2001. Healthy people 2010 statistical notes, no. 20. http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/data/statnt/statnt20.pdf